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ABSTRACT

Fifteen literacy programs, structured as partnerships between Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) in Texas and nonprofit literacy councils, were reviewed. Interviews were conducted with students, tutors and instructors, program directors and other staff, and partners to study program effectiveness in establishing partnerships and in providing literacy services. Three factors were identified that enabled a program to achieve an effective beginning: filling an identified need within existing literacy services, using resources outside of the program partnership for help and support, and organizing the partnership agreement toward a common goal. Funding did not run smoothly. Some programs attempted to meet original goals in a shortened time frame; all programs experienced a break in services between grant cycles. The partner relationship was strongest when partners worked together in roles extending beyond referral. From the interviews, 10 characteristics describing successful partners developed. Programs offered a multitude of literacy services; staff were predominantly volunteers with little training in adult education. JTPA eligibility determination required extensive documentation, and intake assessment instruments were uneven in their capacity to determine participants' abilities. "Word of mouth" was most successful in encouraging enrollment. A model of an effective partnership program was developed. Four areas were targeted for recommended changes: grant application process, training, partnerships, and program delivery. (Interview schedules are appended.) (YLB)

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PARTNERING FOR LITERACY

An Evaluation of the JTPA Partnership Grants Program

by

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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July 1992

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Title Note: A partner we interviewed at one of the programs, when asked to explain why their partnership worked particularly well, said simply, "We're all in this together." That attitude of shared responsibility was a key element of effective partnerships, and we include it in the title of this report to signal its importance in this program.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beginning in 1989, the Texas Department of Commerce, through the Texas Literacy Council, has solicited proposals for literacy programs to be funded through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Title IIA, 8% Funds. These literacy programs, structured as partnerships between JTPA Service Delivery Areas in Texas and local nonprofit literacy councils, are intended to serve JTPA-eligible persons identified as educationally disadvantaged.

In February 1992, the Texas Literacy Council contracted with the Texas Center for Adult Literacy and Learning (TCALL) to review the fifteen programs which received grants during the 1991-92 program year, and to report on their effectiveness in establishing partnerships and in providing literacy services to an identified population of participants. A qualitative research method was chosen as most appropriate for studying the substantially different programs across the state because no data were available to indicate how the programs were organized or being implemented. The report of the findings provides a perspective on the partnership programs from the experience of those directly involved in those programs.

Three factors enable a program to achieve an effective beginning: 1) filling an identified need within existing literacy services; 2) utilizing resources outside of the program partnership for help and support; and 3) organizing the partnership agreement toward a common goal. Funding of the programs does not run smoothly, with some programs attempting to meet original goals in a shortened time frame and all programs experiencing a break in services between grant cycles. The linkage between the business community and the programs is often weak, even when the partnership structure within the program is strong.

From the interviews, ten characteristics describing successful partners developed.

The strength of the partner relationship is strongest when the Private Industry Council, the nonprofit literacy council, at least one formal education partner, and at least one social service agency work together in roles which extend beyond referral. From the interviews, ten characteristics describing successful partners developed. These characteristics define the partnership as a collaboration and cooperation process which supports the delivery of literacy services.

Programs offer a multitude of literacy services, from one-on-one tutoring to group instruction and computer centers, with a continuum from the standardized LVA or Laubach curriculum to site-specific curricula. English-as-a-second-language, family literacy, and special population programs are included at a few

sites. Staff in the programs are predominantly volunteer, with little training in adult education. The staff exhibit a high level of caring and commitment which enables programs to achieve their goals.

The intake process involving the JTPA eligibility application, and the assessment of the participants' skills at entry are fraught with problems. Eligibility determination requires extensive documentation from participants unfamiliar with the required paperwork. Assessment instruments are uneven in their capacity to determine students' abilities.

Participants are recruited for the programs through the assistance of social service agency referrals, but often "word-of-mouth" is most successful in encouraging participants to enroll in the program. Participants seek learning in order to improve their chances for becoming employed and to assist their children's learning. The program's impact on participants often extends beyond job skills to building of self-confidence and life skills. Child care and transportation are the primary barriers to entry and continuance in the program for participants across the state, although programs endeavor to solve those problems.

Three areas are targeted for recommended changes. The grant application process can benefit from minor strategic revisions to the RFP and from work towards closing the funding gap. Both partnerships and program delivery can be strengthened with a planned training approach at state, regional, and local levels.

INTRODUCTION

The evaluator's responsibility is to people, not things.

"Evaluation" is a concept which usually generates feelings of negativity by those individuals being evaluated, particularly if an external evaluator is being utilized. Because of mistakes, misunderstandings, and sometimes improper attitudes about the role of the evaluator, the image suggested by Maanen (1979, p. 11) of an external evaluator is sometimes warranted, "... a steely-eyed 'efficiency expert' who marches semi-annually into program settings to disrupt the established enterprise and cast a disparaging shadow over the efforts of a hardworking staff."

However, the evaluator must remember why evaluations are important–the improvement of programmatic or organizational activities. The evaluator's responsibility is to people, not things. Therefore, since there are many audiences involved in an evaluation–participants, teachers, administrators, funding agencies–the needs of all must be considered. This perception agrees with Strake (1991) who is inclined to let program stakeholders influence the purpose and, to some extent, the conduct of the evaluation process, preferring to believe that evaluation can provide a service and become useful to the different audiences involved.

Therefore, the staff of this evaluation project have addressed various audiences, both directly and indirectly, through the findings in this report. No attempt was made to criticize program staffs, either by individuals or groups. However, when possible, exemplary practices are identified by program, not only to call attention to those activities, but also to guide the development of the recommendations which are found at the end of the report.

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), created in 1982, contains a major goal: To prepare economically disadvantaged (below relative poverty level) youth and adults for entry into the labor force. As a part of that goal, funds are provided under Title II, Part A, for basic literacy skill development. In Texas, in 1992, there were 15 sites which had grants from the Texas Literacy Council (TLC), Texas Department of Commerce, to initiate and develop partnerships between the local JTPA program and a community-based literacy organization to provide those basic literacy skills needed by adults in the community. These grants were initially awarded in 1989 and, in January 1992, discussions were be-

gun with staff at the Texas Center for Adult Literacy and Learning (TCALL) to develop a proposal to evaluate those partnership programs.

When the staff of the TLC and staff of the TCALL began discussing this project, the primary focus was upon (1) learning what was happening in the programs funded through partnership grants under the JTPA in Texas, and (2) determining how they could be improved. Since no previous evaluation of this kind had been conducted, the two groups considered the potential impact which might be obtained within the constraints of time and costs available to the staff. This evaluation was then designed to address the need for descriptive information on these programs as outlined by the TLC.

In this report we offer an in-depth description of the JTPA literacy partnership programs from the various perspectives of all involved–directors, partners, instructors, students. It is as if we were trying to describe what was going on inside a house by looking through several different windows. It is our belief that such a multidimensional description provides the most accurate assessment of how these programs function.

This report summarizes our findings regarding what contributes towards effective partnership programs. Additionally, we make a series of recommendations based on those findings. It is our hope that this report will benefit this literacy effort and contribute to the increased effectiveness of these programs across the state of Texas.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM SITES

The evaluation team visited 15 sites around the state (see Figure #1). The following information will provide a brief overview and a description of the individual site activities. In developing the Description of Program Sites, we started with the information provided in the proposals and then supplemented those data with information we collected in the field through our interviews. The sites are presented alphabetically according to the grant recipient name provided in the proposals.

This information is provided so that the reader will have some idea of the variety of services available across the state. It provides one indication of the reason why it is so difficult to compare sites. Some of the sites possess a great deal of experience and have a broad network of resources from which to draw, while others are initiating literacy efforts for the first time this proposal year and could benefit from a regional or statewide support network.

Partnership Site Locations

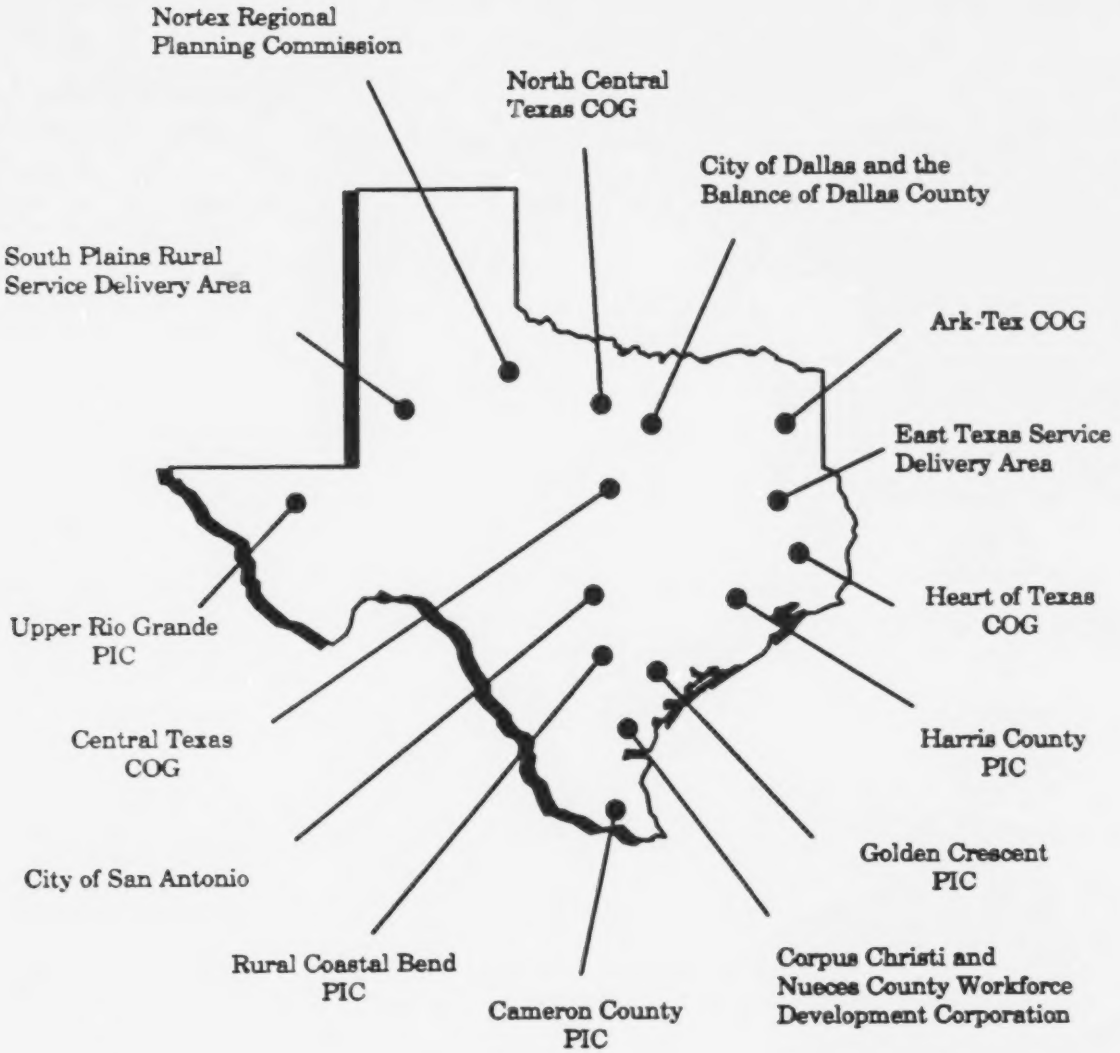
Nortex Regional Planning Commission
North Central Texas COG
City of Dallas and the Balance of Dallas County
South Plains Rural Service Delivery Area
Ark-Tex COG
East Texas Service Delivery Area
Heart of Texas COG
Upper Rio Grande PIC
Central Texas COG
Harris County PIC
City of San Antonio
Golden Crescent PIC
Rural Coastal Bend PIC
Cameron County PIC
Corpus Christi and Nueces County Workforce Development Corporation

Figure 1

ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

P.O. Box 5307
Texarkana, Texas 75505

Instructional site(s)

- Tutors and students decide on a convenient location
- Northeast Texas Community College

Participating partners

- Ark-Tex Council of Governments
- Bowie/Miller Counties Literacy Council
- Northeast Texas Community College

Description of program activities

Because of the distance (approximately 60 miles) between the two training locations, the partners operate independently. Both partners are responsible for their own recruiting, advertising, assessing and teaching. Local JTPA offices were assigned the responsibility of participant intake.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

At the Bowie/Miller Literacy Council, the teaching method used is one-on-one tutoring, while the Northeast Texas Community College uses computer-assisted instruction.

The current program is in its first year of consecutive funding.

CAMERON COUNTY PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

285 Kings Highway
Brownsville, Texas 78521

Instructional site(s)

- Community centers
- Brownsville Adult Literacy Center

Participating partners

- Cameron County Private Industry Council
- Amulfo Oliveira Memorial Library
- Cameron County Housing Authority
- Texas Department of Human Services
- Brownsville Housing Authority
- Christ the King Church, Brownsville
- Brownsville Adult Literacy Council

Description of program activities

The PIC administers the grant and certifies participants who are referred by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Brownsville Adult Literacy Center. DHS identifies welfare recipients and handles case management. The Brownsville Housing Authority and Christ the King Church both provide classroom space. The Brownsville Adult Literacy Center conducts pretesting and hires teachers. The PIC also provides transportation and child care.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

- Group instruction
- One-on-one instruction

The current program is in its second year of consecutive funding.

CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

P.O. Box 729
Belton, Texas 76513

Instructional site(s)

No formal training location is associated with this grant program.

Participating partners

- Central Texas Council of Governments
- Central Texas College–KNCT
- Belton Literacy Council
- Greater Killeen Literacy Council
- Temple Literacy Council (Gatesville)
- Windham School System
- Central Texas Adult Education Cooperative
- Florence Public Library
- Harker Heights Public Library
- Casey Memorial Public Library
- Gatesville Public Library
- American Education-Complex Systems Library
- Copperas Cove Public Library

Description of program activities

KNCT develops the curriculum for this program. KNCT has also taken on the responsibilities of advertisement, recruitment, and participant assessment. As a contribution to the program, the other partners are asked to refer participants to KNCT. Participant intake is handled by the staff at the JTPA offices in Belton, Killeen, and Temple.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

Instruction centers around the whole language method utilizing video-based curriculum which is produced by the public television station at Central Texas College (KNCT). The program is broadcast throughout the Killeen viewing area.

The current program is in its first year of consecutive funding.

CITY OF DALLAS AND THE BALANCE OF DALLAS COUNTY PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

3625 North Hall, #900
Dallas, Texas 75219

Instructional site(s)

- Deaf Action Center

Participating partners

- City of Dallas and the Balance of Dallas County PIC
- Deaf Action Center
- Dallas County Adult Literacy Council

Description of program activities

One-on-one and group tutoring in sign language is supported by computers and videotapes for visual learning.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

The curriculum which is developed specifically for this project teaches the concept of words as language first since deaf adults communicate with sign language and think in symbols. They then move into reading instruction.

The current program is in its first year of funding.

CORPUS CHRISTI–NUECES COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

5110 Wilkinson Drive
Corpus Christi, Texas 78415

Instructional site(s)

- Del Mar College

Participating partners

- Corpus Christi–Nueces County Workforce Development Corporation
- Corpus Christi Literacy Council
- Del Mar College
- Corpus Christi Public Libraries
- Corpus Christi Housing Authority

Description of program activities

WIC (the PIC) is responsible for intake and eligibility. The program is administered by the literacy council. All partners share responsibility of referral.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

Formal classes and computer-assisted instruction.

The current program is in its third year of funding.

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
(DEPT. OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES)

P.O. Box 839966
San Antonio, Texas 78283

Instructional site(s)

(Proposed)
- San Antonio ISD, Bowden Elementary
- Harlandale ISD, Adams Elementary
- Edgewood ISD, Stafford Elementary

Participating partners

- Communities in Schools, San Antonio, Inc.
- Edgewood ISD
- Harlandale ISD
- San Antonio ISD
- Education Service Center, Region 20
- St. Mary's University
- San Antonio Public Library

Description of program activities

Had not begun at the time of the site visit, April 1992.

Description of predominant teaching methods

Had not begun at the time of the site visit, April 1992.

The current program is in its first year of consecutive funding.

EAST TEXAS SERVICE DELIVERY AREA

3800 Stone Road
Kilgore, Texas 75662

Instructional site(s)

- Trinity Valley Community College
- Junior High School and Libraries in Marshall

Participating partners

- Private Industry Council–East Texas SDA
- Athens Literacy Council
- Trinity Valley Community College (ABE Center)
- Jobs, Training and Service, Inc.
- East Texas Employment and Training, Inc.
- Marshall/Harrison County–Literacy Council, Inc.

Description of program activities

One-on-one tutoring, with computers available as students move on to the JTS lab in Marshall. This program depends primarily on volunteer tutors. A computer learning lab is in Athens.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

LVA, with additional purchased materials available for tutor use.

The current program is in its second year of funding.

GOLDEN CRESCENT PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

2401 Houston Highway
Victoria, Texas 77901

Instructional site(s)

- Victoria Adult Literacy Council

Participating partners

- Victoria College
- Victoria Adult Literacy Council

Description of program activities

PIC is fiscal agent and handles recruitment, intake, certification, case management, and follow-up. The adult literacy council trains the tutors, who in turn instruct participants. The literacy council is also responsible for record-keeping. A literacy coordinator makes sure that everything runs smoothly.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

- Computer-assisted instruction
- One-on-one instruction

The current program is in its second year of consecutive funding.

HARRIS COUNTY PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

1001 Preston, 9th floor
Houston, Texas 77002

Instructional site(s)

- High Meadow Library
- South Houston Library
- Woodforest Library

Participating partners

- Harris County Library System
- Houston READ Commission

Description of program activities

The PIC is responsible for participant intake and eligibility while the READ commission controls the day-to-day activities of the program. The library system provides the instructional facilities.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

Small group instruction.

The current program is in its second year of consecutive funding.

HEART OF TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

300 Franklin Avenue
Waco, Texas 76701

Instructional site(s)

- Schools in Elm Mott and Hillsboro

Participating partners

- Heart of Texas Council of Governments
- Region 12 Educational Service Center
- McLennan Community College
- Mental Health Association
- Texas Department of Human Services
- Waco-McLennan County Library
- Equal Opportunity Advancement Corporation
- Hispanics for Education
- Hillsboro ISD
- Hill College
- Hillsboro City Library
- Center for Adult Learning at Baylor University
- Texas State Technical College
- McLennan County Youth Collaboration

Description of program activities

The COG is responsible for recruitment, referral, intake, eligibility, assessment, and other support services. They also provide intake on-site at Elm Mott. The partners in Hillsboro and Elm Mott provide instruction.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

- Group instruction
- One-on-one instruction

The current program is in its third year of consecutive funding.

NORTEX REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

2101 Kemp Boulevard
Wichita Falls, Texas 76309

Instructional site(s)

- Work Services Corporation (day)
- Washington School (evening)
- Lamar School

Participating partners

- Nortex Regional Planning Commission
- JTPA
- Wichita Adult Literacy Council
- Work Services Corporation
- Region 9 Education Service Center

Description of program activities

One-on-one tutoring with computers, plus group work at all locations. Family literacy component is in place at evening sites. In-service tutor training in curriculum is on-going.

Description of predominant teaching method used

Tutors are either LVA or Laubach trained and are working on newly developed curriculum. Attempts are being made to incorporate work skills and group dynamics into the curriculum. A paid instructor also coordinates and modifies materials and makes them available for tutor use.

The current program is in its first year of funding.

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

P.O. Drawer COG
Arlington, Texas 76005

Instructional site(s)

- LVA
- Johnson County Jail
- Adult Education Cooperative Office

Participating partners

- North Central Texas Council of Governments
- Cleburne ISD (Adult Education Cooperative)
- Johnson County Law Enforcement Center
- Palo Pinto Community Service Corporation
- Johnson Community Supervision and Corrections
- Texas Rehabilitation Commission
- LVA/Cleburne
- Johnson and Somervell Counties Community Supervision and Corrections

Description of program activities

Students at levels 0-4 are provided day and evening instruction at the LVA site, including one-on-one tutoring and computer-assisted instruction. A program is offered at the jail in evenings with computer-assisted instruction offered to levels above grade 4. There is a day program offered for individually paced group work.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

Tutors at jail site combine Laubach with Steck-Vaughn materials.

The current program is in its first year of funding.

RURAL COASTAL BEND PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

P.O. Box 1780
Beeville, Texas 78104

Instructional site(s)

- Alice Public Library
- LVA office
- Center for Continuing Education

Participating partners

- Rural Coastal Bend Private Industry Council
- Bee County Adult Literacy, Beeville
- Literacy Volunteers of America, George West, Live Oak County
- Texas A & I University, Kingsville, Center for Continuing Education
- Adult Literacy Program, Alice Public Library

Description of program activity

The PIC is responsible for recruitment and referrals, certification, assessment, and intake, while the partners provide instruction.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

- Group instruction
- One-on-one instruction
- Computer-assisted instruction

The current program is in its third year of consecutive funding.

SOUTH PLAINS RURAL SERVICE DELIVERY AREA

P.O. Box 610 (411 Austin Street)
Levelland, Texas 79336

Instructional site(s)

- Computer Center, Littlefield
- Laubach Center, Levelland ISD

Participating partners

- South Plains Rural Service Delivery Area
- Carver Literacy Council
- Lamb County Library
- Lamb County Literacy Council
- Texas Employment Commission
- Hockley County Library

Description of program activities

Eligible participants are assigned to either the Lamb County Literacy Council for computer-assisted instruction or the Carver Literacy Council for tutoring.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

- Computer-assisted instruction
- One-on-one instruction

The current program is in its second year of consecutive funding.

UPPER RIO GRANDE PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

1155 Westmoreland, #235
El Paso, Texas 79925

Instructional site(s)

- Schools
- Library
- Partners (e.g., BRAVO, El Pan)

Participating partners

- Upper Rio Grande Private Industry Council
- El Pan
- El Paso Center of the Deaf
- El Paso Public Library
- Literacy Coalition of El Paso
- El Paso Community College
- Texas Department of Human Services
- Project BRAVO
- El Paso ISD
- Ysleta ISD
- Association for Adults and Children with Learning Disabilities
- Even Start
- Socorro ABE Cooperative
- Laubach Literacy Council of El Paso

Description of program activities

The PIC is the leader in the partnership and performs case management, fiscal responsibilities, administration, certification of eligibility, recruitment, support services, intake, assessment, and referrals. The partners provide training and other services as needed.

Description of predominant teaching method(s)

- Classroom instruction
- Computer-assisted instruction
- One-on-one instruction

The current program is in its third year of consecutive funding.

METHODOLOGY

The object of this study, in its broadest terms, was to understand how these partnership programs function in order to develop a model of effectiveness. Because the focus was on process rather than outcome, and because that process involved social interaction, it was appropriate to use a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is descriptive in character and is concerned with understanding the meaning that people give to their experience (Merriam, 1989). In this study that meant that our goal was to understand the subjective experience of the people involved in these partnerships–students, instructors, program directors, and partners–so that we could gain a composite view of how these programs function. In a sense we tried to get inside their experience so that we could see the programs from their various perspectives.

Qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning people give to their experience.

The primary means of collecting data in qualitative research is through interviews. For this study each of the 15 partnership grant programs was visited by one of the five researchers on the team. These site visits were arranged in advance with program directors, who were asked to provide information about the program and to schedule interviews with various people involved in that program. At every site the researcher conducted, on average, 10 interviews, speaking with selected current students, tutors and instructors, program directors and other staff, and partners. Telephone interviews were later conducted with several students who had completed the program and with some who had dropped out of the program. In addition, the administrators of four programs that had been offered funding but had declined it were also interviewed. [A copy of the interview questions for each of these groups is given in the Appendix.] This was a purposive rather than a random sample of people interviewed. In qualitative research there is no need for a random sample; instead there is a need to find people who can clearly articulate their experience. For that reason we asked the program directors to select those students, staff, and partners who in their judgment could give us the greatest amount of information. Because we were not evaluating individual programs but rather seeking to understand what contributes to the effectiveness of this type of program overall, this approach to sample selection seemed appropriate. However, at several sites the team member interviewed students in addition to those selected by the program director and responses of all were compared for reporting purposes.

All of the interviews were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. Once all the interview transcripts were completed, data analysis began. This process had several stages. We began by reading several interviews in one group of participants–for example, current students. As we read each interview, we identified the basic categories of information that were being presented, and we coded the transcripts accordingly. For example, in one portion of the interviews the students would discuss what they expected to gain from being in the program, and we coded this information "anticipated benefit"; at another point in the interview they might describe what was going on in their lives that motivated them to sign up for the program, and we coded this information "contextual factors." We then read and coded all the interview transcripts for that group, revising the coding categories until we had accounted for all the information presented by this group. This process was repeated for all the groups of participants–students, tutors/instructors, program directors, and partners. At the end of this stage we had approximately 35 coding categories that were used across the entire data set.

The next stage of the analysis involved the use of a computer program, Ethnograph, that functions as a data management system. All of the interview transcripts were on file in this program, and the coding of all the information in each interview was entered. Ethnograph then sorted these data according to our directions, most commonly by specific codes. For example, we asked Ethnograph to find all the suggestions that anyone made for changes in the program, and it searched the entire data set for any information with the code "changes" and printed those out. It also enabled us to search for related codes at one time, or to search for a code only within a particular group, such as students. The computer program thus enabled us to access similar data across all the interviews.

Themes that emerge from the data contribute directly to the findings of the study.

The final stage of analysis involved examining the sorted data and determining what common themes were present. This is very much an inductive process but the data usually provide very clear and unambiguous findings at this stage. For example, when we analyzed the coding category "partner interaction," ten themes emerged that we saw as characteristics of successful partnerships from the perspective of those involved. These in turn became an essential part of the framework for our model of effective programs. The emergent themes from the data, then, contribute directly to the findings of the study.

It is important to understand that this study, like all qualitative studies, describes reality from the perspective of the participants in that reality. It is an interpretation, not a representation, of that reality. This study tells you how these

people experience and interpret these partnership programs. Our assessment of effective functioning of these programs, then, is based on these perceptions of all the people involved in the programs, rather than on specified outcome criteria.

With that in mind, the report of findings follows. The findings are presented in two broad groups. The programs are first discussed in macroscopic terms–how the programs were implemented, how the partnerships function, and how the program delivery systems work. The findings then present the internal view–the perspectives of the people directly involved in the provision of literacy services. The findings allow us to understand the partnership programs from a systems model. The macro-program view shows us the programs in relation to their external environment, and the micro-program view shows us the programs' impact on people.

FINDINGS

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Program History

In analyzing program organization and partnerships, a study of the first steps in a program is often illuminating. In this case, program history identified catalysts for the programs–need and initiators.

Two needs addressed by this grant had already been identified in communities. Private Industry Councils (PICs) and literacy providers had both seen a need to offer literacy services as a step towards employment for the economically disadvantaged but were limited in providing such services under previous JTPA programs. Also, in communities with established literacy councils, the need for cooperative public and nonprofit efforts in providing literacy services across a community had already been seen. Thus, when the Request for Proposal (RFP) from the Texas Literacy Council arrived in Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) across the state, the idea of partnership programs was a good fit to meet existing needs.

The idea of partnership programs was a good fit to meet existing needs.

Although the initiators of the grant applications varied, action typically came from the PIC or from a nonprofit literacy council. Getting the announcement onto the desk of the initiator is vital. For programs in larger communities, a staff person at the PIC or literacy council who reviews RFPs is a successful channel. For programs in smaller communities, luck sometimes appeared to play a part in whether an initiator heard about the RFP and decided to assemble the partnership team necessary to complete the grant application.

Enhancement of program start-up occurred two ways. Literacy programs that were already in existence drew from their experiences to design grant programs that acknowledged problems and planned solutions, proposing increased effectiveness of the program. And the fact that some or all of the partners had worked together on other projects prior to this program facilitated cooperation and exerted a positive influence on the program as a whole.

The major problem identified in applying for and initiating a program is time. Regardless of the initiator's experience in preparing grant applications or the partnership members' experience in working together, the process of choosing appropriate partners, developing an agreement on the project goals and design,

and preparing the grant application is time-consuming, as are most decision-making and planning processes.

Once the application is submitted, the acceptance and funding process also takes substantial time. Because of changes in submissions and available funds, programs we visited had start-up dates ranging from October 1991 to February 1992, all with a completion date of June 1992. This disparity in program length was one determinant for the use of a qualitative research method, since programs were not alike and could not be compared quantitatively.

The major problem identified in applying for and initiating a program is time.

Enabling Factors

There are certain factors, discussed below, which help a program to achieve an effective start, smoothing the way towards providing the literacy services needed by the students. These three factors occur in the data in descriptions of both successful and unsuccessful programs. The presence of any one of these factors is a plus. The presence of all three factors contributes to the rapid success of a program.

The first factor is that the program has dovetailed into existing literacy services. It is planned as an extension of literacy services already offered in the community, filling a need that the current literacy programs have been unable to meet. Or, it is a pilot program to meet a new need or a hidden target population, complementing programs already in place.

The second factor is that the program has drawn on auxiliary resources outside the partnership for help and support. In the Dallas program, development of a site-specific curriculum for the deaf was aided by voluntary assistance from nearby educational experts, and the program director drew in resources from as far away as Pennsylvania for ideas.

The third factor is that the program has goal-directed people involved in the program partnership. Because they are competent to provide educational services, to administer the program, and to work in a partnership format, they concentrate on providing a quality program.

The synergistic effect of the factors working together is particularly noticeable.

What is particularly noticeable here is the synergistic effect of the factors working together. The first two clearly place the literacy program in relation to existing literacy services within and beyond the community. The program develops a central goal which can then be supported by the goal-directed people described as the third factor. The focus provided by these enabling factors builds

an effective delivery system for literacy services.

Funding

Of the fifteen programs, ten share the grant money among the partners; five do not. Most of the programs made a group decision on division of the money prior to submitting the grant application. This funding distribution can change over time as a program receives additional years of funding, and as the partnership undergoes some revision to become more workable.

In El Paso, the on-going program exhibited strong partnership agreement on all issues, including funding. One partner interviewed stated that when she first became part of the process, she expected the attitude "What's in it for me?" She discovered that the existing partnership attitude is "What can I contribute?" In this SDA, the PIC is seen as fair-handed, allocating funds as needed.

Funds allocation can be an area of dissension among the partners.

However, funds allocation can be an area of dissension among the partners. Partners in some programs would like to receive information on funds distribution, perceiving their share in the program as possibly unfair. Others felt excluded from the decision-making process rather than from fair allocation of funds. These attitudes support the necessity for development of a fully communicating partnership which can change as partner needs change.

The PIC is usually the grant administrator, but in at least one case–in Belton/Temple/Killeen–the administrative agent is the literacy provider. Where the PIC serves merely as a channel for the funds, partner disagreement over the grant can occur. In one program, a partner was allocated the entire grant which upset other partners who felt they were excluded from the program. As a result, the remaining partners were reluctant to get involved in the partnership process, waiting to be asked to participate rather than volunteering.

An unusual approach was taken in the Waco program. The PIC sought bids from literacy providers in their SDA, subcontracting with two for delivery of literacy services. While the practice of bidding is usual for the provision of products to public agencies, it is not often used for the provision of services. In this SDA, problems were encountered with the bidding process. Only one suitable subcontractor, who could serve only a portion of the SDA, responded the first time bids were requested, requiring a second bidding process. The second subcontractor found is located at a distance from the participants. Bus service to one subcontractor's delivery site was arranged by deobligating a portion of the funds

from the other subcontractor.

Program partners realize the external needs for child care and transportation assistance to support the ability of participants to attend literacy classes. While some programs do not attempt to meet these needs, others include their costs in the grant funds or as a supplement to program funds provided by partners or auxiliary sources.

While determination of actual cost-per-student for each program was a goal of this project, that goal could not be met. Forms requesting direct, indirect, and in-kind costs were distributed to program administrators for completion by each partner. However, the information provided varied widely. Some partners completed the form for actual costs to date (date of the interviewer's visit), others completed the form for the grant year, predicting costs to June 30, 1992. Some partners included every possible item of in-kind contributions, while others generalized to larger contributions. These responses, plus on-site observations of donated furniture and equipment ranging from recently purchased discount file cabinets to antique oak bookcases to computers of all ages, require future detailed analysis for true cost assessment.

The most serious problem related to money is the funding cycle.

The most serious problem related to money is the funding cycle. Some programs' funding started in October, while others started as late as February, all with a June 30 ending date. One program staff stated that they had received notification of the grant award in October, but in March they were still awaiting a signed contract. Programs are expected to show substantial faith and to develop temporary funding sources in order to provide services during the interim. However, the programs are still held to their original objectives, regardless of the reduction in time available to reach those objectives.

In addition to the slow receipt of funds at the beginning of a program, the ending date also produces a funding problem. If a program applies for a grant the following year, the wait between the end of one program year and notification of an award for the following year can be three months. This means programs are actually providing services for nine months instead of twelve. The gap in funding is most critical for small programs which must stop providing any services when the program year ends on June 30. The small program is likely to lose participants (who do not understand why the three-month-delay occurs) and to lose volunteer staff to other pursuits.

The small program is likely to lose participants and volunteer staff.

Business Linkages

According to the RFP, "the purpose of this grant program is to create or enhance local partnerships between Private Industry Councils, local nonprofit literacy councils and one or more of the following: public libraries, adult basic education providers, community based organizations, community colleges, technical institutes and universities." It is clear from our interviews that the programs are structured to include these partnership entities.

The connection between the literacy program and the PIC is not always strong, though. If the PIC is the grant administrator, then this relationship is forged through on-going contact. PIC staff often visit the program site and communicate with the program director, collecting "success stories" to share with PIC members. The Education Subcommittee at one PIC is very interested in the outcome of the program. In another SDA, one partner described the PIC as being "right-handed, and they have their right hand in this program," which is evidence of definite partnership in the program.

However, in other SDAs the literacy partnership program is left to survive on its own because of the perception that these funds are a very small grant for the effort required. When the PIC serves only as a pass-through agent, receiving the funds and directing the money on to the literacy council or another entity for dissemination and administration, the connection between the program and the PIC is weak. If the PIC's involvement is slight, the partnership may suffer, or may even dissolve.

Business-and-industry linkage in the partnership is crucial.

Because JTPA monies are intended to support ventures into public-private partnerships to more effectively match employer and social service/training needs, business-and-industry linkage in the partnership is crucial. As evidenced by the Wichita Falls program, which successfully went to the business community asking for advice and input into the development of a curriculum which could teach literacy and math skills with a job focus, business and industry leaders want to support programs which allow them to remain in a community, employing a local workforce. Since approximately 50% of the programs offer job skills training–a category including interviewing, resume or portfolio preparation, and learning to work in groups–a strong partnership with businesses would allow programs to refine their curriculum to more closely match employer needs and participant desires. As discussed elsewhere in this report, the most often expressed goal for students is to find a job.

Ties to business and industry in each local area can be strengthened. Where some business input is now provided by PIC staff or by spouses of program staff who are influential in the business community, it appears that programs could benefit from the marketing, fund-raising, and management skills of the business community. In return, programs could provide students with skills which are transferable to a work environment as well as being personally rewarding. One partner in Corpus Christi expressed the business community's attitude towards the program, saying, "Just the atmosphere of the town is something the business community needs. It's not for things for all of us to make money off of."

PARTNERSHIP BEHAVIORS

Types of Structures

In the grant proposal, the services each partner will contribute are delineated as a means of describing the program organization. What we found in the field was two differing patterns for organizational structure based on the actual interaction between the partners. These patterns are (1) a top-down hierarchical structure, and (2) a network.

There are two differing patterns for organizational structure based on the actual interaction between the partners.

The hierarchical structure is typical of very small programs composed of the PIC, the nonprofit literacy council, and another social service agency or community-based organization. In several cases, the PIC is located in a community at a distance from the program. In this structure, responsibilities of each partner have clearly observed boundaries. The grant administration and management is completely handled by the PIC at the top of the hierarchy. The literacy council provides the literacy services and the remaining partner(s) provides referral, program site, or other support services. Meetings among the partners are rare, with most of the problem-solving and networking responsibilities left to the literacy council, which may or may not have the staff to support such efforts.

The network is found in more complex partnerships involving educational partners and social service agencies as well as the nonprofit literacy council and the PIC. In this structure, the boundaries of responsibility are more flexible. The PIC provides grant administration, participates actively in meetings, and promotes partnership interaction. Partners may switch or revise responsibilities in adapting the program to meet their objectives during the program year. For example, when partners in one program determined that the intake and assessment

processes were clumsy when performed by different partners at separate sites, they agreed that one partner would perform those functions, traveling to all sites.

Although partners are strongly committed to the program, the schedule of involvement by some partners varies. In one partnership, representatives of all partners meet on a regular basis. However, a partner with responsibility for referral may hold several neighborhood meetings to recruit participants at the program's inception, then become less active in the partnership until again needed. Communication becomes the link which maintains the partnership between agencies, and this linkage is only effective if it is accepted as important by the group.

Communication becomes the link which maintains the partnership between agencies.

Partner Responsibilities

Typical activities of the partners involved in this program are referral of participants, active recruitment of participants and tutors, public relations/community awareness education, program intake, JTPA eligibility certification, curriculum development/revision, literacy services, counseling, grant administration, functional decision-making, child care, transportation, tutor training and oversight, extension into other training programs (such as family literacy or pre-GED), and outreach to nonpartners. While even small partnerships see the need for the variety of services and responsibilities required to provide literacy education, programs with larger partnerships are more likely to be able to meet those needs in a cost-effective manner.

For example, a small program with few partners may need to provide child care and transportation in the budget. A larger partnership may be able to provide alternative solutions for child care and transportation because of a larger resource network. In the Corpus Christi program, the local bus company provides tickets which are distributed to students who have transportation needs, even though the bus company is not an official partner.

Administration and grant management are usually the responsibilities of the PIC, or its designee such as a Council of Governments (COG). While some programs include the literacy council and other partners in the funds management system, some do not. This is usually a partnership decision and is tied to subcontractor agreements in the SDA. While one program chooses to focus strictly on delivery of literacy services, another program's partners would like to know exactly how the funds are distributed.

Partner Contributions

The organizational strength of the program is dependent on the partner-to-partner relationship. The strongest program develops when the PIC, the nonprofit literacy council, at least one formal educational partner and at least one social service agency partner actively work together. The weakest programs occur where the PIC is located at a distance from the program, where the literacy council has no experienced educational support, and where referral is the only responsibility of the other partners.

Organizational strength in a partnership is important to insure that participants are identified and referred, that the social service needs of the participants are addressed, that social service funding dollars meet allocation schedules without overlapping, and that the program's activities support its objectives. The partnership is improved when many partners contribute actively to the program. The ability to solve problems and meet the various needs of the participants is enhanced when a group of partners with many capabilities are working together to develop solutions.

The partnership is improved when many partners contribute actively to the program.

Exemplary Partnership

As interview data were analyzed, a description of what would make the partnership work more successfully was developed. The elements of this description include overall responsibilities for different types of partners in the programs.

The PIC should be actively administering the grant by regular and impromptu communication with other partners and by streamlining the JTPA paperwork process. Partners recognize and accept the need for a record-keeping process, but most have commented about unrealistic administrative expectations. The paperwork is often described as a nightmare, especially in requirements for information often not available from the group of participants for whom these programs are targeted.

In programs where the PIC is located at a distance from the literacy council, PIC staff involvement is crucial to help the program build partner networks and find resources. Where social service agencies provide referral and eligibility documentation for participants, their support for the program is vital. The PIC can encourage a regular meeting process for problem identification and solution, plus serving as a catalyst for bringing additional resources and partners into the

process.

Education agency partners should contribute information about current trends and new ideas in adult education. Using program curricula which are adapted to the participants being served, an increase in completion rates and an increase in staff and participant satisfaction with the program can be expected. While programs provide the best literacy services they can, program staff are aware of changes which can increase participant retention rates and accelerate adult learning. Educational partners can provide a needed information resource in this area.

Social service agencies which see these same clients should develop a "safety net" to insure that eligible participants are referred to the program. In addition, they can devise innovative solutions to the pervasive problem of losing clients in the shuffle from one agency office to another. In Wichita Falls, partners telephone each other when potential participants have been referred so that the participant can be warmly greeted at the next office. In Cleburne, the JTPA office sends a representative to agency offices on a regular basis to complete intakes, thereby simplifying the application process for participants.

Literacy councils are in a special position in these partnerships.

When partners know the social services offered by each other, they can match survival needs of potential participants–child care, transportation, vision testing, food, clothing, shelter, and counseling–with existing services. This helps participants become ready for literacy education and promotes the primary functions of each agency. In addition, a working partnership can help all partners to understand the differing focus and viewpoint of the many public agencies, nonprofit groups and private businesses who care about literacy needs.

Literacy councils should concentrate on their mission to educate participants, to inform the public about literacy, and to connect literacy providers across a community. Literacy councils are in a special position in this partnership. As nonprofit agencies, they can function as the facilitators of problem-solving. They can unite social service agencies which are part of the public bureaucracy competing for limited funding dollars. They can also bring the business sector into the partnership through volunteers, donations, and in-kind services. The ability of the nonprofit organization to unite community support in solving problems which cannot be solved by public funding alone should not be underestimated.

Successful Partnership Behaviors

The partnership arrangement which occurs in these programs differs from

site to site. This is partially a function of the existing literacy and social service agency network and partially determined by the time available to reply to the RFP and apply for the grant. The number of partners in a program ranges from three to fifteen, and some programs have added partners partway through the grant year as community support for the program increases.

Our interviews elicited descriptions of behaviors which characterize successful partnerships. In fact, the people we interviewed provided a substantial amount of data regarding good, and not-so-good partnership behaviors, enabling the development of ten "successful partnership" characteristics. Most programs exhibit many of these characteristics of successful partnership, with some characteristics stronger than others.

However, not all programs are successful at partnership interaction. The programs where the partnership is weak or nonfunctional also have poor quality literacy services. They have problems coordinating child care and transportation, they have problems getting participants into the program, they lose many participants in the eligibility process, the curriculum does not meet participants' needs, and the program staff shoulder a tremendous amount of responsibility for program function. The comments made by interviewees from these programs were an important part of shaping the limits for characteristics of success.

Descriptions of the interaction between the partners were rich and detailed.

Descriptions of the interaction between the partners were rich and detailed. It was in this category that we acquired the most similes and metaphors during our conversations with the interviewees. The metaphors which are included in the characteristics below are quoted from the interview data.

1. Successful partners have **FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT**. They meet together on a regular basis to discuss the program. Monthly meetings are considered most profitable. The meeting schedule for on-going programs, e.g., third year grants, may be more irregular, depending on the partners. Smaller meetings interspersed with meetings of the full partnership are seen as effective time management. In Corpus Christi, the program holds staff meetings to resolve delivery problems on an alternating basis with partner meetings. This face-to-face contact allows for both conflict resolution and establishment of personal, human connections vital to all communication.

2. Successful partners **LEARN** how to function together. In Cleburne, the partners started by meeting every two months. They soon realized that was not often enough to be effective, so a monthly meeting schedule was established instead. At another program, one partner said they may have disagreements at the

meetings, but the partners need to hear each other's point of view. Partners "view meetings as important enough to send a representative if they can't make it," reports one interviewee. They are willing to try to work together even if they have not done so before.

3. Successful partners **COMMUNICATE**. They not only have meetings, but they talk with each other on the phone regularly. They work to insure that all partners receive copies of minutes from missed meetings and agendas for future meetings. They network with each other at the "worker bee" level, "where the rubber hits the road," getting to know the contributions and limitations of each other as agency representatives and as human beings. It is the continued communication between partners, even when a partner is less active, that makes the partnership successful and ongoing. Strong partnerships view all of the partners as valuable contributors on the basis of timely services rather than measuring equal contributions.

Strong partnerships view all of the partners as valuable contributors.

4. Successful partners **BUILD BRIDGES**. They are willing to go out of their way to help each other, to make the partnership work. "We're like a family." They see lack of political jousting and the absence of turfism as important for partnership functioning. They establish close relationships with any agency that serves the same clients. They don't wait for someone else to make the first contact. One partner detailed a personal persuasion process by which he talked the local college into not just passively supporting but actively advocating the program.

5. Successful partners have **REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS** for the partnership. They understand that social service agencies have different goals, priorities, and funding limitations than nonprofit literacy councils or private sector contributors. They don't expect everyone to be perfect all the time. "You're always going to have growing pains," says one partner.

6. Successful partners are **FLEXIBLE**. They allow for differences in philosophy towards students, in management style, and in ability to contribute to the program. They see "many roads to Rome" and look for ways to help each other feel needed in the program partnership. The partners adapt as the program changes over time; they see ways to revise and improve the program to make it more successful.

They see "many roads to Rome."

7. Successful partners **SOLVE PROBLEMS**. Rather than be stopped by a problem, they look for solutions and alternatives. They ask for change from one another; they ask for change in the bureaucratic system. The Cleburne program,

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which was not meeting its target for students, saw potential participants slipping away in the Adult Probation program. Working as a partnership, the literacy council and probation officers developed a solution which was willingly adopted by the district judges.

8. Successful partners are **MAGNETS**. Because they work well together, other people want to belong and be successful, too. The partners pull in additional partners, gaining community support. In El Paso, one interviewee said they started with thirteen partners this program year and continue to add partners as the year progresses.

9. Successful partners have a **COMMON GOAL**. They never lose sight of the reason they are working–the students. No matter how successfully a partnership interacts, if the students are not enrolled or the students don't stay, the program is not a success. The partners work hard at the partnership because they care about the students. One partner described the interaction among the partners as the need to "gee and haw," or pull in harness together.

10. Successful partners have at least one **STRONG LEAD PARTNER** to keep the interaction going. According to one partner, it's the leader's responsibility to "water all these little flowerbeds all over town." For example, the program director in Cleburne takes responsibility for communicating with the other partners, for calling meetings and organizing locations, and for keeping the partners motivated with the program. The lead partner typically keeps an "eagle's eye view" on the partnership process to encourage its continuance. But other partners are willing to assist and support the lead partner.

The lead partner typically keeps an "eagle's eye view" on the partnership process.

These ten characteristics of successful partnership are the behaviors which allow the program to function well on a daily basis. These characteristics define the partnership as a process of cooperation and connection, building a flexible structure which is anchored among the partners and which supports the literacy services.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Philosophy

Partners in the program evidenced broad understanding of the day-to-day problems which must be solved in order to provide literacy programs–transportation, child care, appropriate locations and hours of service, counseling and es-

teem-building. They also expressed a deeper understanding of their purpose. Partners described a philosophy of adult education which sees students along a continuum. On one end, the goal of adult education is "remediation" in which the student is a passive receiver of services, whose needs are determined by the provider. They view students as relatively helpless and unable to "get on with their lives" without assistance.

On the other end, the goal is more than teaching basic skills in preparation for jobs. These partners want to help students view education as fun, as a means of building self-esteem, and as an opportunity for improved quality of life. They focus, as in the Levelland program, on meeting their students on an adult level. They see students as partners in the program, too, partners in the learning process. One partner says that students are "diamonds in the rough," that they are a great resource for the nation that can be tapped through education. Another partner uses group discussions to allow the rich variety of life and work experiences of students to be shared among their peers, helping everyone.

The philosophy towards adult education which espouses the view that adults contribute to the educational process, even low-level literate adults, is more commonly found among partners who are trained in professional education. These partners see the students as more than bodies to be channeled into programs and counted as successes or failures at the end of the program. They see the students as having needs which are not directly expressed, but which are needs to be met by the program all the same. These are human needs for connection, for recognition, and for dignity.

Students are "diamonds in the rough," a great resource for the nation.

Curriculum

Programs think of themselves as student-centered in curriculum and flexible in schedule. Over and over again, partners stated that the programs like to focus on the individual, to give specialized design through one-on-one tutoring and monitoring of the computer programs to insure than the participants are successful at learning and to help participants avoid learning situations in which the they were not successful in the past. This one-on-one approach is emotionally rewarding for the teacher or tutor.

In practice, standardized curricula such as Laubach or LVA may be using a far less individualized approach for meeting the real learning needs of participants. While it is important to keep the participants on track, teachers should be

aware of the participants as adults who want to be there. Some teachers have developed a range of additional methods and materials to make a standardized curriculum more relevant to the needs of the participants. Other tutors with good intentions but little educational experience receive little direction and may be improvising with a curriculum based on their own perception of what is appropriate.

Motivation is likely to stay strong longer if students see a direct connection between their goals, such as obtaining a job, and what they are learning. To that end, some programs have begun reviewing and revising their curriculum offerings to reflect their participants' perceived needs.

Several programs took on development of a site-specific curriculum to meet the needs of their potential participants as part of this grant program. While these programs have been successful at developing a curriculum, the time involved in such development has had a negative impact on the time available to deliver literacy services and to allow participants to meet targeted goals for literacy improvement. The usual curriculum development process, which includes a pilot program and revision of the curriculum, is planned in each instance. However, completion of the curriculum will not occur under the partnership grant program unless the program site is refunded in the next grant year.

Several programs took on development of a site-specific curriculum to meet the needs of their potential participants.

Delivery

Programs are structured on three variations–one-on-one tutoring, group classes, or a combination of the two with one-on-one tutoring for beginning participants and classroom groups for reading levels above fourth grade level. A program which offers only one-on-one tutoring is likely to be small, yet is probably the most flexible for the participants, offering schedule and location options that meet the needs of the participant and the tutor.

Programs with structured classes have formal schedules in specific locations. While this may be less flexible for student schedules and cause transportation to become an issue, the formal classes serve several purposes: First, participants experience a different learning environment from previous classrooms; second, peer support is available; and third, the program director can verify student achievements and provide tutor support as needed. In addition, a committed location for classes is often a location which provides computer labs as well. Several programs are open during nonclass hours for student study or practice on the computers. A number of programs provide both one-on-one instruction, espe-

cially for lower-level readers, and classroom instruction.

Classroom programs are also flexibly scheduled, with programs offering both day and evening classes where possible, and in different locations which are accessible by participants. In one program, the local bus service stops at 5:00 p.m., so evening classes have been arranged at a school within walking distance of neighborhoods of potential participants. Typically, the evening program offers only a portion of what is offered during the day, not the full complement of courses. One program offers family literacy as a night class, making it possible for both parents to participate.

In one program, the local bus service stops at 5:00 p.m., so evening classes have been arranged at a school within walking distance.

One common problem for scheduling is the grant funding cycle. With a small program which is planned to start in October and finish at the end of June each year, participants who are enthused and motivated to continue must wait three months–July, August, and September–for a new funding cycle to begin before they can resume the program. This means that programs must maintain contact with participants during that time who often have no telephones in order to help them stay in the program. The commitment of volunteer tutors and other staff must be maintained as well. For programs that are only a portion of a larger literacy effort, the participants can be continued if other funding is found during that three-month period.

Later in this report we explore more fully some participant perceptions of scheduling. Not all programs offer schedules which fully meet the needs of their participants, although partners typically expressed an awareness of those needs. Some programs offer unscheduled times for students to come in and study on their own or work with the computers. Many programs report that participants have asked for more classroom time and more free time, especially for work with the computers.

Technology use is supported by the programs. Approximately two-thirds of the fifteen programs use computers and have labs available for students to practice on the computers. One former participant stated he liked the computers because this was something new, something that his friends and neighbors did not know how to do; computers are perceived as special, not remedial work. Most programs report that participants are highly motivated to work with the computers and plan to provide more when funds and useful software make it possible.

All of the programs evidenced understanding of the social problems which limit a participant's ability to come to class. Two big limitations for the potential participants in this program are child care and transportation. These two limita-

tions prevent the participants from obtaining other social services such as food and shelter assistance as well as literacy services, and are problems which social service partners have been working to resolve. Literacy providers often find that the partnership allows the program to offer child care and transportation services contributed by other partners.

Literacy programs are offered in a variety of locations, depending on available resources and the transportation needs of their participants. The most typical locations are libraries (for one-on-one tutoring), independent literacy centers, literacy centers adjunct to other social service providers such as a job training office or a jail, and educational institutions. One program, Corpus Christi, found participants accepted a college location with enthusiasm, since approval is given to participants by their peers for "going to college." Another program, Brownsville, determined that part of their success is their location right in the housing complex where their participants live. The program has become an accepted part of the community.

Technology use is supported by the programs.

While the partnerships make the program happen at the macro level, the actual contact between a person with needs and a person who can assist occurs on the micro level. People connecting with people offer a perspective on the program which is just as important as the external perspective. In the next section we begin presentation of the findings which are detailed, people-specific perspectives from the program staff.

COORDINATING EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

Effective functioning of the partnerships at the program level involves a variety of processes. First, program directors must hire competent staff members to assist in the operation of the programs. Some of the program staff members are paid, but a large percentage are volunteers. Some are hired after JTPA funding is awarded, while others have been involved in literacy programs that are continuing and expanding due to the additional funds received. Whether the program is in its infancy or has been operating for many years, each program director wanted to attract staff members with specific qualities that would enable the program to operate most effectively.

Staff Recruitment

The qualities sought in staff members are divided into two major categories–education/training and background/experience. Applicants with the highest qualifications are most desired. Most of the literacy programs prefer to hire staff members who possess a bachelors degree in education. A teaching certificate is another preferred credential. The most important quality the applicant can possess is prior experience with the target population. Often, a program director will opt to hire an applicant without a degree if that applicant has a high school diploma and documented experience in human services. One director had this to say about recruitment efforts: "I'm not interested in looks. I'm not interested in credentials as much as I am in experience."

Similarly, there is a growing interest across the state to hire specialists with backgrounds in curriculum development, reading, learning disabilities and English-as-a-second-language (ESL). Additionally, applicants who speak Spanish are preferred since a large percentage of those enrolled in the literacy programs are Hispanic.

The most important quality an applicant for a staff position can possess is prior experience with the target population.

In addition to the educational and experiential qualities just mentioned, personal qualities are also an important hiring consideration. Program directors commented that their staff needed to be "good with people," sensitive, patient, and empathetic. One director said their staff members needed to be "one-half missionary."

The evaluation team was interested in determining how the staff is recruited since most programs must work within a limited time frame and since obtaining qualified staff is crucial to the success of the program. The most effective form of staff recruitment and advertising reported was by "word of mouth." However, other sources of advertising for staff positions are also utilized. The most creative source was related by the literacy council in Texarkana which has a speakers bureau in place. Speakers representing the literacy council address civic and religious organizations to gain community interest and support in literacy endeavors. In addition to these two methods, other traditional methods of advertising include the use of newspapers, radio, and the Texas Employment Commission. Finally, other partners were sometimes mentioned as good sources of advertisement and recruitment.

Staff Description

We found that those people who are eventually recruited, whether paid or volunteer, bring a high degree of education and experience to the program. Most of the staff members do have the desired background in education or a related human service field. Aside from education and experience, the commitment and caring exhibited by the staff is surely the "life blood" that keeps the programs going. It was reported that some paid staff members come in on weekends on their own time to make the facility available to participants who are hungry for knowledge because as one person put it, "you just have to be there when they can be there."

Aside from education and experience, the commitment and caring exhibited by the staff is surely the "life blood" that keeps the programs going.

Other signs of staff concern are exemplified by those who go the extra mile to see that applicants in need of literacy services receive help in collecting the appropriate paperwork to document JTPA eligibility. Some staff have gone into homes to help participants find the correct paperwork (a difficult task for a person who cannot read). We found that empathetic staff members often go to great lengths to accommodate the needs of potential participants. One director commented that, "the minute they walk through that door or make that phone call, then we want to make it easy from that point on."

And the caring goes beyond the learning environment as well. Some staff members take participants with health problems to a doctor for medical treatment. They call participants while they are in the hospital to let them know that they are cared about as individuals. The staff do what they can to reduce as many obstacles as possible that stand in the way of successful outcomes for students who are trying to better themselves.

In addition, staff members get excited about student successes. They enjoy sharing in the accomplishment of the students, as is evidenced by the following remark from one staff member: "We had a party for a woman who used to be in our program and got her GED recently. And we bought her a gift by pooling our money together. We were so excited for her because she had some problems and perhaps those problems were barriers to her getting the GED. We think she is really a success."

Though the staff bring a wealth of compassion, experience and knowledge, we discovered that tenure in the program for most staff members is unusually brief. This phenomenon is probably due to the lack of continuity of funding, since the smaller programs depend on JTPA funds for their existence. Without

year-round funds, the smaller program activities are halted or reduced and often the staff members move on to other endeavors. Additionally, those programs that begin after the public schools are in session lose the opportunity to hire potential instructors.

While many of the staff members stated that this was their first year in the program, there are a few who have been involved in literacy for several years. This was not the norm, however. One program, for example, has been funded for three years and has had a new program director each year. The process of stopping and starting each year, whether it is caused by interrupted funding cycles or a turnover in personnel, negatively affects the quantity and quality of services that can be provided. Strategies to reduce these inconsistencies should be identified.

Staff Development

The first training most instructors receive when they enter the program is a 12-15 hour Laubach course. The training is transmitted through a variety of methods. Some of the new instructors are self-taught–they watch a video tape or review printed materials on their own. Others receive one-on-one instruction from peers, while some participate in group training. Some received no training at all.

The process of stopping and starting each year, whether it is caused by interrupted funding cycles or a turnover in personnel, negatively affects the quantity and quality of services that can be provided.

While many new instructor/tutors say they are satisfied with the training they receive, others feel they could benefit from in-service training opportunities. They indicated that additional training sessions addressing availability of complementary resources, or development of individual teaching materials would strengthen their tutoring abilities. And, as one program director commented, "We want to get our volunteers and our paid staff into classes so that they are not just stuck on Laubach."

Additionally, we found that while some staff members do attend state literacy conferences, there is little or no systematic training offered either locally or statewide. Consequently, the training of the instructional staff seems lacking.

Without formal training, one program, Texarkana, started a tutor support group that meets regularly to allow tutors the opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas as well as share information and discuss similar concerns. These kinds of collaborative efforts benefit everyone involved in the programs. With little in the way of systematic staff development, the tutors still exhibited a sense

of tireless commitment and devotion to their students. We found that the enthusiasm and appreciation expressed by the students and the words of encouragement offered by the paid staff went far in keeping the motivational levels of the tutors high.

Participant Recruitment

With a support staff in place, attention turns towards the recruitment of participants for the programs. Typically, the recruiting methods used for staff are also used for participants. Again, word of mouth was mentioned most often as a means for recruiting participants. Employers, friends, and family members served as excellent program promoters because these were people that the participants trusted. In many cases their advice provided the incentive for initial enrollment by the participant.

We found that while some staff members do attend state literacy conferences, there is little or no systematic training offered either locally or statewide.

Participant Characteristics

Before discussing participant involvement with the program, it is appropriate to describe the unique characteristics and experiences that define this target population. This description is based on the perceptions of the staff members who deal with the participants daily.

Staff members in the programs across the state have no problem in finding the disadvantaged and hard-to-serve people identified as the target population. What is difficult is to narrow down the list of those in need of literacy services and to obtain supporting paperwork.

Many of these people are in the lower socio-economic levels. They have poor work histories sometimes caused by learning disabilities that have never been overcome. Many potential students lack social support at home as well as the self-esteem that is required to initiate involvement in a new educational endeavor. Many of the clients also have health problems, for example, poor vision or malnutrition, that serve as major obstacles.

The environments from which the potential students come are certainly barriers to their success. However, internal motivation drives many of these students to participate. Those who are parents are good parents, determined and tenacious, who want to give their children opportunities they have never had. Often these participants were themselves "kids who slipped through the cracks in the

school system." Therefore, their pasts often haunt them. Many feel "beaten down" and have a tendency to become easily discouraged. They have failed so many times before in traditional educational settings that they are uncertain and sometimes unwilling to risk another try. One staff member offered the following insight: "They are afraid and they are ashamed. When they come to you, if you can't do something for them right then and let them know they are worthwhile and that they can learn and that you're going to help them, you won't see them again." Luckily, they do perceive education as the best means for improving their lives. One student had this to add: " Everywhere you go, they ask you for the GED. If you don't have it, you don't even get an application ... so it's hard for me to ask .... The one thing I am counting on is getting my GED."

"When they come to you, if you can't do something for them right then and let them know they are worthwhile and that they can learn and that you're going to help them, you won't see them again."

What these people needed most at the outset and continuing through the process was a friend, someone to "help them over the rough spots." There are always rough spots and frustrations for students who feel they have so far to go. Luckily, the staff members, other students, and family members provide strong support.

Participant Objectives

One of the main reasons that students participate in the literacy programs is the desire to improve as parents. They are interested in helping their children acquire a better education than the one they had received and are additionally interested in making improvements in their own basic educational skills so they can play a more active role in their children's education.

Another common objective for students is the desire to obtain a GED certificate. After being in the program for a while, students began to see that progress was possible. Some were even thinking beyond the GED and considered going on to college, particularly a community college.

Even when students do not have children or aspirations of attending college, they all want to find a job.

Even when students do not have children or aspirations of attending college, they all want to find a job. Many need to first acquire basic skills, while others must participate in a literacy program to keep the job they have.

The students interviewed had dreams of improving their working conditions. Some wanted less physically demanding work. Many students in this category were convalescencing from an injury and were using this time to increase their education, while others were simply interested in achieving greater autonomy or earning higher wages. Participants wanted the prerogative to choose employ-

ment rather than being obligated to settle for the lowest paying, least prestigious jobs. Some even expressed the desire to become self-employed. Many students were struggling to survive and were happy to have any job, but other students who had been in the program for a while began to express even greater career aspirations. Mentioned most often were the helping professions, for example, nursing and child care specialists. Additionally, the literacy students participating in computer-assisted instruction were also excited about increasing their computer-literacy skills and perhaps pursuing a computer-related profession.

Other student objectives that didn't fall into the previous categories but were nonetheless important included the desire to reduce uncertainty about their future or the ability to function in an English-speaking society. Students participating in literacy programs with a concentrated ESL program expressed this final objective as their primary concern.

Participant Eligibility

Problems with the Process. Among the problems expressed by staff of the program sites, eligibility requirements for potential participants was most often indicated. Determining eligibility differs among the sites because at some sites the PIC staff assumes the major responsibility, whereas in other programs the literacy council (partner) initiates the procedure, although the final decision remains with the PIC. Sometimes there appears to be some confusion in regard to the requirements themselves because the literacy council staff will determine the individual to be eligible, but the PIC staff does not agree. Therefore, the potential participant becomes even more confused and hesitant about entering the literacy program.

When participants get jobs, they must leave the program; staff perceive this as a penalty.

More specifically, problems associated with eligibility revolve around the following issues:

There is confusion about some eligibility requirements. For example, staff always expressed frustration that "when the participant becomes employed, he or she must leave the program." Although this is a requirement, program staff perceive this as a penalty to those persons who are industrious and are seeking employment while trying to improve their education. If a participant leaves the program because of employment and then loses that job, he or she must go through the lengthy eligibility certification process again before being allowed to resume the literacy program. That, in itself, discourages some from reentering the pro-

gram. In addition, there is confusion about the criteria. Since sixth grade is the maximum level at which an individual can remain in the program, is that 6.0 (beginning of sixth grade), or 6.9 (end of sixth grade)? Does that mean sixth-grade level in all content areas, including math and writing, or only in reading? Or can the levels attained in each subject be averaged? Clarification for all program staff is needed.

There is too much paperwork involved in the eligibility process.

There is too much paperwork involved in the eligibility process. This was a common complaint by staff in all programs because of the myriad of paper requirements, i.e., social security card, driver's license, birth certificate (many older adults don't have them), rent and utility receipts, etc.

In addition, many program staff indicated that the potential participants don't know what to look for because they cannot read what they have. Therefore, in some programs staff from the partner organization go to the home of the adults who want to enter the program and review their materials to help them meet the eligibility requirements, carefully going through a pile of papers which has often been poured from a box onto the kitchen table. As some indicated, "We're not sure it's worth the effort." That becomes a more critical issue when documentation for every family member is required.

There is too much delay between being initially certified and finally being allowed to begin classes. Once the partner or the PIC staff indicate to an individual, orally, that everything appears to be in order, there may be a two- or three-week delay before the official paperwork is processed through the JTPA office. Until that process is complete, an individual cannot officially be enrolled in the literacy program. Sometimes the potential participant simply becomes discouraged and goes elsewhere, or in some cases, when the partner is trying to work within the criminal justice system, the individual is released from jail and cannot be easily located. If the individual has been transferred to a unit of the Texas Department of Corrections, there seems to be no way to receive information about whether the individual has been offered literacy classes. This was a concern to staff in some programs.

The potential participant simply becomes discouraged by delays in the application process and goes elsewhere.

There is often no coordination among the agencies involved in the certification process. Obtaining information from the Office of Human Services can be delayed, especially when the adult does not remember the name of his or her caseworker. Staff at one PIC will accept information from another agency in regard to eligibility certification through a telephone call or a FAX, whereas others will not do so. As indicated by some staff, "The more agencies involved in get-

ting information about eligibility, the longer the individual will wait before being certified." Unfortunately, paperwork is sometimes lost between agencies and the applicant must start all over again. Many will not do so.

Problems with Referrals. Potential participants often do not keep appointments. Regardless of who refers individuals to the programs, appointments may or may not be kept. This can be discouraging to the program staff, and sometimes the staff members prefer recruiting their own participants instead of taking referrals from other agencies.

Referrals are often reluctant to go to another site for the interview. When they must go to the JTPA office for assessment, particularly for the interview, some simply won't or can't go. Even when transportation is not a problem, potential participants do not wish to go to a site different from where they made first contact about the program, for example, the partner's office or the referral agency's office.

They are sometimes discouraged by the paperwork and simply don't return.

Some consider the paperwork too much of a hassle. Once the potential adult students learn how many records, receipts, etc., they must find, and how many forms they must sign, they are sometimes discouraged and simply don't return.

Those with high school diplomas or GED certificates do not want to enroll in the program. They feel they have already proven themselves to be literate and although their assessment scores are low, they find the program enrollment recommendation/requirement too discouraging, so they don't return.

Problems with the Screening Process. When screened by both the partner and the PIC, the results are sometimes different and confusing to the potential participant. Sometimes one group tells the individual that she or he is eligible, but then the other does not approve the application. This in turn confuses and discourages the applicant.

Those certified through a previous grant do not want to repeat the process. They feel they have already qualified the previous time (last year), so why must they repeat the process? Their lives haven't changed, at least in their perception.

The volume of paperwork itself becomes an obstacle for applicants. They are discouraged by what seems to be "piles" of forms to sign, and it is conceivable that less persistent adults drop out even before they start.

There are virtually no instruments to adequately assess adults with learning disabilities. For example, in Dallas, the Deaf Education Center provides the in-

take services because that is more efficient than training someone in the PIC to be able to do the intake. However, when such services are not available from another agency, the PIC must provide them and there is very little help available through conventional screening devices.

All programs do not use the same reading assessment tool. In some cases, potential participants are required to take a test of approximately three hours in length when shorter instruments of equal screening ability are available. Many students indicated that they almost left the program when required to take such a long test when enrolling in the program.

Problems with the program. There is some inconsistency in who is allowed to attend classes. In some sites, if the person has been initially, but unofficially, declared eligible, then he or she is allowed to begin attending classes. However, at other sites a person cannot participate until the "official" documents certifying that she or he is eligible have arrived.

With a myriad of problems facing them, students often must overcome multiple barriers to participate in the program.

Students are not steady in their attendance. With a myriad of problems facing them, students often must overcome multiple barriers to participate in the program.

Sometimes the students' goals are higher than their ability to attain them. It is not uncommon for participants to believe they can complete the program in a few weeks. However, based upon the assessment results, many months or even years may be required before they will be prepared to successfully enter the workforce or earn their GED certificate. They begin comparing themselves to another family member or a friend who made faster progress, and thus may become so discouraged that they leave the program.

The short-term funding is discouraging to local program staff. The start-up, stop, start-up-again nature of the funding causes concern for both participants and staff, particularly since so much time is required for the eligibility process. The inconsistent, undependable funding sources create stress in all aspects of the programs.

Positive Factors. In some programs, several agencies work together to handle the needed documentation as easily as possible. For example, in El Paso, the Department of Human Services (DHS) will FAX a copy of an applicant's food stamp or welfare data to the PIC for eligibility purposes, saving the applicant the time and trouble of going to the DHS office.

Some program staff have developed ways to somewhat simplify the eligibility process . In Waco, staff have developed a prescreening device of about ten questions which, when answered, indicate if the individual may be eligible. If so, then the process begins for that person. This saves effort when the individual would not have been eligible after going through the entire eligibility process.

Many staff go beyond what is expected.

Staff who are bilingual seem to be available at almost every site for eligibility activities. There seemed to be much sensitivity to the need for bilingual and bicultural staff being available wherever the intake process was being conducted.

In many programs, only certain individuals work with the screening process. Thus, they usually know which documents will be difficult to obtain and they can assess the applicant accordingly. In addition, those persons work closely with the partner staff if they are involved in assisting the applicant with the eligibility process, and they remain someone who can be contacted when problems arise in the future.

Although much time and effort are required, staff in several programs become actively involved in assisting applicants with the eligibility process. Whether going to the home or to another agency, many program staff go beyond what is normally expected to assist in the process. In some cases, they pay the fees for the documents when the applicant cannot afford them. This shows genuine concern for those who are in need of the program. In addition, staff go to the partner site to conduct the eligibility activities when the applicant cannot go to the JTPA site.

Participant Assessment

In many instances, the first contact of a prospective participant with a program is crucial. The initial impression may be motivating and may encourage someone to enroll in a program, but it may also be a deterrent. Many of the prospective participants have experienced educational failure in one sense or another earlier in their lives and now fear educational settings. They are also nervous about taking tests. For many participants, however, the first contact with the program is an assessment that might be a dramatic experience, even somewhat frightening.

The first contact of a prospective participant with a program is crucial.

Participant assessment seems to create some problems. More than ten different assessment instruments are currently in use, the most common being the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Other assessment instruments, such as the

Woodcock-Johnson, the ABLE, the Job Corps Test, the FRI, and the Berganse, are also used. The concerns mentioned most often either relate to the administration of the tests or to the suitability and reliability of the tests.

The administration of certain assessment tests requires the assistance of professionally trained people, such as diagnosticians. For some programs that use these types of tests, the availability of diagnosticians caused problems. A few of the other instruments in use require initial training for the test administrator which is often lacking. Several assessment instruments were reported to be lengthy and time consuming. The fact that certain instruments do not detect specific problems, such as dyslexia or other learning disabilities, seems to be an additional concern.

Other comments referred to the suitability and reliability of assessment instruments. Some instruments in use do not assess reading levels below a certain grade level; therefore, participants reading at a very low level must be assessed a second time with another instrument. In certain instances, tutors felt a need to reassess participants although they had been assessed during the admissions process. This raises questions about the accuracy of certain instruments while creating even more anxiety for the participants.

The assessment procedure appears to be a major concern of many program directors and staff members.

The assessment procedure appears to be a major concern of many program directors and staff members. Most staff members wanted more information about ways to properly assess new students.

An alternative to the traditional ongoing assessment methods to monitor participant's progress in the program is a blind assessment. This kind of ongoing assessment is only possible at sites that are equipped with computers. The computer monitors and evaluates student's progress automatically. The tutor can recall information about a participant's progress at any time, which allows him or her to provide the participant with additional exercises in the areas of weakness. This procedure creates a low-anxiety environment for the participants.

Another option for on-going assessment is a student portfolio. However, rather than one single approach or a single test for the evaluation of participants' progress, a combination is probably the best approach, depending upon the skills of the program staff. Furthermore, it is essential for people involved in the assessment procedure at any stage to be properly trained. Professionally administered assessment instruments facilitate the assessment procedure, lower participants' anxiety level, and lead to more accurate and reliable test results.

Implementing Instruction

Many of the tutors interviewed were trained in and currently work with the Laubach materials. The majority of the tutors reported that the needs of the participants are so diverse that they cannot be addressed appropriately with the use of one single workbook series. Therefore, many tutors have developed supplementary teaching materials to try to meet participants' needs more effectively and accurately. Many tutors try to develop materials that are tailored to each participant's life situation. Their goal is to make the instructional content applicable to the student's life situation.

Many tutors have developed supplementary teaching materials to try to meet participants' needs more effectively.

Many of the participants have experienced failure in earlier educational efforts or in their personal lives. Initially, they have a very low self-concept. This is another challenge for the tutor. Not only are instructional skills a necessity but good interpersonal skills as well as communication skills are equally important to enhance participants' self-esteem.

The tutor must be a professional who effectively delivers information. And the tutor should also be a caring and supportive person who motivates and encourages the participant. Through the interaction with the participant, the tutor must discover what works for the individual and offer instructional material and support according to the immediate learner needs.

The use of technology is still gaining popularity in educational settings. The majority of the sites have computer labs. However, computers must be properly integrated into the entire teaching process to utilize their full potential. Hence, the integration of technology is another challenge with which some tutors must contend.

Participant Attitudes Towards Learning

Participants are convinced that being able to read and write will help them to become employed and to improve their lives.

The participants are aware that being able to read and write is important. They are convinced that having these skills will help them to become employed and to improve their lives. Many participants who only meet with their tutors twice a week would like to meet more often. Also, participants who had access to computers wished to meet more often and for longer times. Some indicated that they enjoy computer-assisted instruction to the extent that it was difficult to leave once their learning period was over.

Most participants have a precise idea of what they want to achieve in the program. They work hard toward their goal and seem to do everything in order to attend classes. The statement, "anything can be done if you really want to," was mentioned many times. Once participants had been in the program for a while and noticed progress, excitement seemed to have replaced their initial insecurity. One instructor described "one lady [who] walks about ten blocks [to class] ... and she has been here waiting on me in the mornings in the cold and snow... so you know, she wants to come."

Impacting Student Lives

"Anything can be done if you really want to."

Participants are impacted in many important ways. Not only are they thankful and appreciative for the guidance and support from the staff, they are also beginning to become less dependent on others and are discovering better ways to express themselves. Often this was the "first thing they had ever finished." They are learning to operate within the educational system, and are beginning to view authority figures, for example, teachers and administrators, as friends.

Some reported that they could now share in the reading process with their children. Many can help their children with homework assignments for the first time. One participant even mentioned that she now enjoys visiting with her child's teacher (without feeling intimidated or frightened) to obtain feedback about the child's performance. These accomplishments give students a great sense of satisfaction and pride.

Most of the students' objectives are to find jobs. They can see doors of opportunity opening once they increase their education. Many aspire to go on to college once they master basic skills and obtain the GED certificate.

Other indirect benefits reported by students had to do with the personal impact these programs have had on them. Students expressed increases in self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment experienced from the ability to read for the first time in their lives. One tutor added, "they are more self-reliant, they're sure of themselves. They show more pride in what they're doing.... I've seen people just burst out because they can read and do math ... their independence grows by leaps and bounds."

One success story was conveyed by a program director who provided an excellent example of the impact experienced by one participant.

I had a young man come in with matted and bushy hair. He had on dirty clothes and he looked like he hadn't had a bath. He came in initially for food because we have a pantry in the back. I asked him to fill in this application for food. "I can't read," he said. I asked, "May I talk to you about that?" He said, "Okay". So I scheduled him for the ABLE test, and he went over there and took it and qualified. He was on food stamps. The next two times he came back in, I noticed a slight difference. The third time he came in, there was hope in his eyes. It was just unbelievable. And he has steadily cleaned up his act. I have obtained glasses for him through the Lion's Club and he has gotten a hair cut. He shaves and wears clean clothes now. It's just amazing to see.

Students expressed increases in self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment experienced from the ability to read for the first time in their lives.

Decisions To Leave

Students' feelings about the program sometimes influence their decision to continue. Some feel they are not getting enough attention or at least are not getting what they expected to get from the program. Many students started with unrealistic expectations and often feel frustrated because they are not making the progress they desire. As one tutor commented, "Some students think, oh this is gonna be a breeze and they get here and they find out that it does take some work and they just don't want to do it." And then there are others who simply leave because they feel they can manage on the little amount of education they already possess or have acquired in the program.

In most cases, however, the reasons students leave the program have less to do with the internal activities of the program and more to do with external factors. For instance, they have too many other priorities that conflict with their educational needs. As one staff member pointed out, "It's a big effort on their part to take the time to come up here when they have so many other responsibilities."

In some cases, participants leave the program because they have moved out of the area. Others, who are continually plagued with recurrent obstacles, for example, transportation, child care, and jealous spouses, may soon become discouraged and quit.

Suggestions For Change

Based on many of the factors discussed, the partners, program directors, staff members, instructors, and participants offered their own suggestions for change. Some suggestions are already being implemented while others are being considered for the future.

Many offered suggestions for changes in the JTPA process. Even though JTPA is a federally mandated program, there are surely other states who are experiencing some of the same concerns as those that are being expressed in Texas. Perhaps collectively something can be done to improve this bureaucratically entangled system.

Several people suggested continuous, year-round funding and a majority recommended that a program be funded for at least two years.

Due to the amount of paperwork required for funding, it was suggested that attempts should be made to decrease redundancy whenever possible. Several people suggested continuous, year-round funding and a majority recommended that a program be funded for at least two years. The staff felt they could attend to the needs of the clients better if they weren't constantly consumed with the barrage of paperwork and concerns for funding.

Those interviewed offered several good suggestions for improving partner interaction in the future. One excellent suggestion provided by a program director would not only improve partner interaction but would enhance the service to the client as well, "We would like to set up a referral system so that a client can start at point A and work all the way through to point Z, thus streamlining everything through all the agencies.... It just seems like the process would be so much simpler and would save tax dollars."

The goal is to improve teamwork and communication between partners by building a sound network as a foundation. Those with the foundation in place were interested in expanding the partnership to include more support from other agencies.

Everyone wanted to operate the most effective program possible but many had problems related to the intake process. Some either wanted to change the testing instruments they currently use or hire testing consultants to assist them with an overly complex process.

Some felt the use of a student portfolio would be the best way to assess student performance over the term of the contract. Others wanted to assess the students at the outset for learning disabilities and vision problems which could be overcome with special diagnoses if they were detected early.

Almost everyone wanted to offer literacy classes more days in the week, more evenings in the week, and on weekends. Limited resources were mentioned most often as obstacles that stood in their way. Everyone was interested in overcoming transportation barriers that prevented participants from being served. Whether urban or rural, transportation was one of the greatest prevailing needs.

Teachers were interested in purchasing additional and different kinds of ma-

terials so students could be exposed to a greater variety. There was a growing interest in computer technology. Those who were already using the technology wished to incorporate more of it into their programs, while those who were not currently using it wanted to add it.

The staff hoped to provide better service to the participants in the future. They expressed the need to provide: more one-on-one instruction, more flexibility, more individualized experiential training, and to improve client contact.

Methods that many programs wanted to pursue in the future included the addition of: ESL programs, whole language learning, family literacy, and computer-assisted instruction.

There were three other suggestions that deserve special attention because they concentrate on the unique needs of the participants. The first suggestion was to develop support sessions for participants. One tutor commented, "A lot of these people really need the help of knowing what somebody else is going through–somebody who is in their same kind of situation."

The second suggestion involved the creation of video-taped educational segments, for example, how to fill out a job application or how to obtain a driver's license. Adult learners like instruction to be applicable to real life situations and low-level, literate adults are no exception. Some participants could also learn more rapidly from videos.

The final suggestion was the creation of a mobile literacy unit to overcome the barriers of transportation, especially for participants in remote, rural areas. While a mobile literacy unit might not be the answer for everyone, similar arrangements may be worthy of consideration.

GRANT FUND DECLINERS

Bill Whitloe, a representative for the executive director of the Houston Job Training Partnership Council, and Fritz Taylor, the JTPA director for Nortex Regional Planning Commission in Wichita Falls, were interviewed separately to determine why they each declined the Texas Literacy Council's Partnerships Grant award of $61,745 in proposal year 1989.

Bill Whitloe explained that the Houston Job Training Partnership Council decided to decline the award due to the fact that they were able to fund the partnership through an existing grant program. This enabled them to reduce "additional administrative and training costs."

Fritz Taylor, at Nortex Regional Planning Commission, reported that they already had existing JTPA funds available for literacy efforts and felt other programs in the state could perhaps benefit from the funds if they declined the award. Both of these partnerships had prior experience in obtaining JTPA grant funds and in providing literacy services in their Service Delivery Areas.

Tom Dressler is the Director of Employment and Training at the Panhandle Job Training Partnership (PJTP) in Amarillo. He was interviewed to determine why PJTP declined funds in proposal year 1990. Mr. Dressler reported that the proposal was a "last minute, hurry up deal." He further commented that a representative from Amarillo College wrote the proposal alone and then discovered at the last minute that the funds would have to be filtered through a Service Delivery Area (SDA). The proposal author from Amarillo College then approached Mr. Dressler for PJTP assistance. Mr. PJTP agreed to represent the College and together they submitted the proposal for approval at the state level. The proposal came back approved but was subject to final negotiations. Because the final negotiations were "too extensive," the Panhandle Job Training Partnership and Amarillo College jointly decided to withdraw the proposal rather than to make the necessary adjustments.

Mr. Dressler felt the state's practice of sending RFPs to entities other than SDAs should be reevaluated as many RFP recipients often do not realize that funds must be channeled through a SDA. He commented that this has caused some confusion and frustration for his agency in the past.

Finally, Mr. Dressler has since been able to form a literacy partnership in Amarillo and is requesting Texas Literacy Council's Partnerships Grant funds for proposal year 1992. If the proposal is approved, this will be the first time JTPA

funds have been used for literacy efforts in this region.

Alice Sell, who represented the Literacy Council in Levelland, was also interviewed to determine why the partnership in that SDA decided to decline grant funds in proposal year 1990. The partnership had originally applied for $75,000 and received approval for $61,000. Even so, the cutback was not the determining factor in the decision to decline funds. It was because the partners had no prior experience in working together and because they had a limited time frame to prepare for the program. They therefore jointly decided to decline the funds and wait a year until they felt they could implement a quality program.

Finally, Janet White, the director of the Travis County Adult Literacy Council in Austin, was interviewed to determine why the partners in that SDA had decided to decline a grant award in proposal year 1990. This was the only program where the declination of funds was caused by a strained partner relationship.

The program in Travis County consisted of three partners. Included were the Private Industry Council, the literacy council, and a private entity, the American Institute for Learning. Ms. White received only a small portion of total partnership monies in previous years even though she felt the literacy council had contributed the most resources. Because she and the members of her board felt the missions of the partners were in conflict, the literacy council therefore decided to terminate the partnership in 1990.

When asked why she felt the partnership was unsuccessful, Ms. White indicated three reasons related to the partnership and two related to the JTPA process. In regard to the partnership, she felt that the cost per student was too high, the partner's goals were not synchronized, and finally all partners were not equally represented in the decision-making. Ms. White also expressed concerns about the JTPA process. She felt that the eligibility requirements for students were too stringent, and the participant assessment requirements were too stressful and intimidating for the students.

Ms. White did offer recommendations for change to improve the process. First she felt that because the process was too political, the monies should not be required to flow through a PIC. Second, she felt that improvements needed to be made in the assessment process because she felt that students are not able to conform to the standards set by the JTPA grant program. Finally, she felt the funds should be easier to administer so that the partners could concentrate their efforts on improving literacy in the state.

Ms. White commented that she did not plan on seeking JTPA funds in the fu-

ture if she had to use a PIC as a "pass through" for funds because she felt they have "a different philosophy on how the money should be spent." She felt the literacy council's interests were "client-centered," while the other partners saw the clients as "incidental to the program."

Finally, she felt the money would be "extremely beneficial to her organization but there were too many deterrents" that inhibited her success and the success of her staff in serving those who needed help the most.

MODEL OF AN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

In reviewing the fifteen programs in this study, certain elements of effective functioning could be identified. While no single program evidenced all of these elements, most had various combinations of these factors that contributed to their effectiveness. Each element was present in at least one of the programs studied. When considered together, we believe these elements suggest a model of an effective partnership program.

The model consists of two categories. The first presents those elements which are foundational to program functioning, what we call the overarching characteristics of effectiveness. The second category contains specific activities within the programs.

OVERARCHING CHARACTERISTICS

- Good communication among partners, administrators, and staff.
- Collaborative decision-making.
- Frequent feedback and evaluation related to the functioning of all aspects of the program.
- On-going recruitment and referral of potential students by all the partners.
- An attitude among partners that is characterized by "How can we help each other?" instead of "What's in this for me?"
- A flexible and adaptive approach in teaching.
- An experienced staff.
- Continuity of programing.
- Commitment to the success of students as individuals.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Initial Development

- A core of partners who have worked together in other contexts and who therefore have trust and confidence in each other.
- The local literacy council playing a central role.

- Business and industry actively involved, particularly in curriculum development.
- Professional educators included among the partners.
- Social service agencies involved.
- Clear delineation of partner roles and responsibilities, with those responsibilities including but extending beyond referral of potential students.

Administration

- Regular meetings of partners (ideally monthly) with shared decision-making.
- Frequent informal contact among partners and among staff, in addition to the formal meetings.
- Staff committed to going "the extra mile" to serve participants. This is particularly important during the eligibility process and for student follow-up.
- Networking with other community agencies.
- Sharing of resources.

Program Design and Delivery

- Provide easy access for intake to participants.
- Provision of a positive learning environment.
- Use of computers in the learning activities.
- Flexible schedules.
- Curriculum focused on needs of target population.
- Provision for childcare and transportation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the information acquired in this evaluation study, certain recommendations for program activities have been developed. These are not intended to indicate that the partnership programs are not functioning well. In fact, with the myriad of obstacles which have been identified previously, the evaluation project staff is impressed with the number of good things that are happening with the adult participants through the dedicated staff at the Texas Literacy Council and the partnership organization staff members in the local communities. These are intended for program improvement, realizing that not all can be achieved immediately, but hopefully, they can become a guidepost for program planning and development in the future. The recommendations are presented in four major categories with related sub-categories included.

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

To improve the grant application process, the Texas Literacy Council should:

- Publicize the announcement(s) of the Request for Proposal (RFP) to all literacy councils with the assistance of the PIC. In some cases, it is the literacy council which initiates the partnership grant application and council staff must realize that support of the PIC is crucial if the program is to exist. This realization is not always apparent to literacy councils as indicated in some of the interviews.
- Provide more lead time between issuing the RFP and the required deadline for submitting the proposal. This is especially important for literacy councils which are applying for the first time and must initiate all procedures for partnering with organizations in the community.
- Initiate a bidders workshop for individuals who are interested in applying for a partnership grant. This would expedite the proposal review process through educating applicants in the specific requirements and/or changes in effect for making application. In addition, this should improve the overall quality of the proposals.

TRAINING

When a partnership grant is awarded, a requirement of the funding should include participation of the partnership staff in training, provided by the Texas Literacy Council, as indicated below.

State-wide, or Regional training. This should be offered very soon after grants are awarded. Content should include:

- Participant eligibility–rules and regulations for certification;
- Assessment–goals, needs, and academic abilities;
- Adult learners–why they participate and why they drop out;
- Cultural awareness–values and attitudes of participants;
- Resources–human and material resources available for programs;
- Teaching strategies–methods appropriate for adult learners; and
- Networking–strategies for implementation.

Successful activities already in progress would also be shared among the grant participants during the training. Plans for follow-up technical assistance would also be formulated and shared by TLC staff.

PARTNERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Among the various activities which could improve the effectiveness of the partnerships, assuming that staff are knowledgeable in how to implement them, are:

Sharing Resources

There are not sufficient resources within any one organization to meet all of the program needs. However, when several agencies combine their resources, much more can be accomplished. One suggested practice when a program is newly funded (or when new partners join a program) is for all partners to not only describe who they are and what they do, but to actually train the other partners in the kinds of services they can provide. Communication from all staff related to the program is essential for effectively serving the student clientele.

Networking

This activity should be developed both within the program, among the partners, and between and among the various programs across the state. Within a program, networking can be achieved through regular meetings of all partners (monthly seems to work well in some programs), having training programs for designated problem areas, and carefully planned public relations events which inform the community about the program, emphasizing successes. A successful program may generate interest from other community organizations who want to become a part of this successful endeavor.

Networking among programs throughout the state can produce several benefits for a local program. This could (a) establish a system for sustaining the dissemination of valuable information among the partnership programs on a regular basis, (b) develop a means for staff to share problem-solving techniques, and (c) enable the TLC staff to monitor programs more easily and to increase program quality through regular technical assistance activities, for example, newsletter, bulletins, etc.

Cooperative Planning

One of the issues which seemed to be of concern to partners in some programs was not being involved in the actual planning efforts for the partnership. After the initial meeting has been called to determine which agencies and organizations are interested in participating, the planning and organizing activities are conducted by one or only a few of the partners, leaving the others outside the decision-making role. Therefore, roles and responsibilities of all partners are never understood, and cooperation is never attained, reducing the effectiveness of the program.

Communication

In some programs, partners communicate regularly, either through scheduled meetings or by telephone. They all know the progress of the program, what problems have been detected, and what is being done to solve them. In other programs, partners rarely communicate and not only are they uninformed about critical aspects of the program, there is often some suspicion and mistrust about

the other partners. When communication occurs, students are better served and fewer "fall through the cracks," whether in the eligibility process or from irregular class attendance and related activities. As indicated previously, adult students in these programs need to discern a caring attitude toward them, and communications from all staff related to the program is essential for effectively serving the student clientele.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Intake/Eligibility

Since this aspect of the program seems to provide the most problems, the TLC, in cooperation with the staff at the PICs, should provide partnership staff with the following capabilities:

- Knowledge of the requirements for participant eligibility. Even though all partners don't play a major role in the intake process, some potential students become confused when they receive conflicting information about eligibility requirements.
- Skills for assisting potential participants to learn which documents are required for program eligibility. Many cannot read in any language well enough to even recognize an important document, and some do not pursue entering a program because of this difficulty.
- Competency to work with other agencies to develop collaborative efforts in processing paperwork for certifying eligibility. Too many potential participants lose their motivation for enrolling because of the time and effort required to become eligible for the program. This includes follow-up activities to assure that eligible persons are enrolled as soon as possible after their initial contact with program staff.

Assessment

The TLC staff should provide evaluations of available instruments for initial student assessment and from those evaluations recommend a limited number which incorporate the following features:

- Some evidence that it is valid and reliable;
- Easy to administer;

- Can be completed by participants in less than one hour;
- Useful for local programs, whether grade-level or competency-based; and
- Is as nonthreatening as possible.

In addition, some provision should be made to detect the possibility of learning disabilities among the adult participants. When indicated by regular assessment procedures, a second assessment may be necessary to ensure proper assignment of teaching strategies and materials for learning disabled participants. Whatever and whenever assessment instruments are used, the features indicated above should be of prime importance in their selection.

Content Delivery

All local program staff should attain knowledge in the following areas. Although some of the items found below have been mentioned previously, all are of primary importance in the delivery of instructional services to the adult participants. Since many of the local program staff have not had professional preparation in adult education, the acquisition of the recommended knowledge would enhance their success in working with the program participants.

- The adult learner. Adults are different from children, both in their motivations for attending classes and in their learning styles. They must be treated with respect for the knowledge and skills they have acquired. In addition, they must be assisted in setting realistic goals, both about their capabilities to acquire academic skills within a certain time, and about the future use of the skills they intend to acquire.
- Selection and development of teaching materials. This cannot be left for vendors' decisions. If appropriate materials are not available for purchase, staff must learn to adapt or develop those materials which are most appropriate for meeting the students' needs. This also includes information about computers and their use in the classroom. The data in this study indicate that the adult participants who were introduced to computers were quite positive about them in their learning activities.
- Needs assessment. Adults have different goals for their learning, including achieving basic reading and writing skills, acquiring a job, or furthering their education beyond the GED certificate. Sometimes the program staff assume that all participants have the same goals and teach accordingly. Then they wonder

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why students leave.

- Teaching strategies. Even in one-to-one tutoring, a variety of teaching activities works best, as indicated by the training materials of the volunteer literacy organizations and verified by research in adult education. Motivation to participate is enhanced through the variety of teaching and learning activities provided.
- Cultural awareness. The cultural backgrounds of the students usually differ from those of the staff in most literacy programs, and the partnership programs are no different. However, this poses no problem when the staff are not only aware of those differences but also sensitive as to how they can impact the learning process. Trust and dignity were two concepts which appeared to be very important to the adults enrolled in the partnership programs.
- Location and availability of resources. Many of the teachers and tutors desired information about other resources available for their use. They were unaware of resources outside the program, many of which could be attained within their own communities. As costs increase and budgets become tighter, this knowledge will become more valuable to partnership programs.

Funding

This concept is an issue in almost any educational program, especially when discussing the need for additional funding. Although that may also apply here, the real issue is not so much additional funding as continuous funding. The TLC staff must seek ways to develop some kind of continuous funding of the partnership programs from year-to-year. The discontinuity of funding creates the following problems which were voiced in virtually every program which has been in existence for more than one year:

- More difficult to obtain program objectives;
- Loss of experienced staff who seek employment in more stable environments;
- Loss of participants and their interest and motivation for attending;
- Loss of potential space which is given to other programs that have continuous operations; and
- Loss of valuable time for the participants in reaching their goals.

Technical Assistance. Partners sometimes said they felt "lonely," especially when needing information and assistance in regard to program issues and problems. Suggestions to assist those staff include:

- The TLC staff should endeavor to provide technical assistance following the initial training of program staff (recommended previously). This can be accomplished through the TLC staff members themselves, or through the use of other agencies, e.g., Laubach Literacy International, Literacy Volunteers of America, or other organizations.
- Staff from programs with experience in the partnership program should be assigned as "mentors" to staff in newly funded programs. Thus, valuable experience can be shared and the opportunity for assistance in problem-solving would also benefit new program staff. This may also foster a feeling of mutual support among all of the partnership programs.
- The business community should be included in technical assistance activities. This could range from determining the employment needs of the private sector, including literacy competencies needed by employees, to assistance in program delivery, for example, employees serving as tutors, furnishing space for the program, and other related involvement. The main factor is that the business community will become aware of the program and what it can offer them in terms of prospective employees possessing basic skills, positive attitudes, and a desire for work.

We really are "all in this together." The future of our state and nation will be greatly influenced by the literacy and skills possessed by our population. The partnership grants program is only one effort of many to enhance the learning and potential employment abilities of the undereducated adult in Texas, but it is one. It is gratifying that so many dedicated people are involved in trying to make this program successful in serving those who are most in need.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Partner

1. How long has the JTPA literacy program been in existence?
2. How did the JTPAliteracy program get started?
3. Who initiated the program and what role(s) did they play?
4. What factors were working in your favor when the program originated?
5. What obstacles were working against you in the beginning?
6. Describe how the partners function together now.
7. What are their individual responsibilities?
8. Do you feel that partners function effectively together?
9. What changes would you suggest to increase their effectiveness?
10. How are participants recruited?
11. What resources do you get from the Private Industry Council?
12. What resources or services do you offer to the Private Industry Council?
13. How did you find out about the JTPA literacy grant funds?
14. Can you briefly describe the organization structure for the JTPA literacy grant project?

Project Director

1. What is your title?
2. Who do you work for?
3. What percentage of your time is spent working on this JTPA literacy project?
4. How is your paid staff recruited?
5. What qualifications do you look for?
6. Who administers and/or oversees the JTPA grant funds for literacy programs in this Service Delivery Area?
7. How does your Service Delivery Area hear about the JTPA grant funds for literacy programs?
8. Please describe the organization structure of this JTPA literacy grant project.
9. How long has the JTPA literacy program been in existence in your Service Delivery Area?
10. How did the program get started?
11. Who initiated the program and what role(s) did they play?
12. What factors were working in your favor when the program originated?
13. What obstacles did you have to overcome in the beginning?
14. (For projects in the 2nd or 3rd year only) How has your program changed over the past year or two?
15. In your proposal, you identify several objectives you plan to accomplish this year. How are you evaluating your success in meeting the stated objectives?
16. What factors make your program a success?
17. What factors hinder your program's success?
18. If you had no limitations, what changes would you make in the program?
19. What future plans do you have for the program?
20. Describe how the partners function together. What are their individual responsibilities?
21. Do you feel that partners function effectively together? What changes would you suggest to increase effectiveness?
22. Are there any other agreements used among partners besides the proposal contract?
23. Are grant funds divided among partners? Who makes this decision? How is the decision reached?
24. How are participants recruited?
25. How do you determine JTPA eligibility for participants?
26. Who is involved in the intake process?
27. What problems arise during the intake process?
28. Approximately how long does the intake process take for each participant?
29. What problems delay the process?
30. What pretest instrument is used to determine an applicant's reading level?
31. What kind of posttest is used to determine the increase in the participant's reading level?
32. What factors influence participants who drop out of the program?
33. What are your completion rates for participants?
34. What kind of participant follow-up do you do?

Instructor/Tutor

1. How long have you been an instructor/tutor in the JTPA literacy program?
2. Have you taught in any other programs?
3. If you have taught in other programs, how do you feel about this program as compared to others?
4. Describe how this program works.
5. What materials do you use?
6. Who selects the materials used in the program?
7. Have you developed any of your own materials?
8. Which materials have proven to be especially successful?
9. What teaching methods do you find work the best?
10. Describe the changes you see in participants as they go through the program.
11. How do you think the participants feel about the program?
12. Why do you think some participants drop out of the program?
13. Have you interacted with the other partners in this program? (selection, communication, training)
14. If you have interacted with other partners, how has that worked?
15. What kind of interaction would you like to see?
16. What kind of support do the instructors/tutors get?
17. What kind of interaction occurs among the instructors/tutors?
18. If you were in charge and had all the money you needed, what would you change to make the program more effective?
19. How have you been trained as a literacy tutor or teacher? (LVA or LAUBACH)
20. Was that training adequate?

Current Student

1. How did you first hear about the program?
2. When did you first hear about the program?
3. What were you told about the program?
4. Were there any people who influenced your decision to get involved?
5. What were your reasons for deciding to participate?
6. What did you hope to gain from the program?
7. Think back to the first day in class and describe what it was like.
8. How did you feel about being in the program during that first class?
9. How long have you been in the program?
10. Are your feelings about the program any different now? Explain.
11. How would you describe the program to someone who has never heard of it?
12. What do you like most about the program?
13. What do you like least about the program?
14. Is the location of the program convenient?
15. Is the program offered at a convenient time for you? (day/year)
16. Are there factors that make it hard for you to get to class?
17. How do your (family/friends) feel about your participation in the program?
18. How has your life changed as a result of the program?
19. Have there been any problems with your being in the program?
20. How do you think the program will better your life?
21. What advice would you give to someone who is just starting the program?
22. Suppose you were the person in charge of this program and you had all the money you needed, what changes would you make?
23. Would you join the program if you had it to do all over again? Explain.
24. Would you encourage others to participate? If so, what would you say to them?
25. Based on your experience in this program, how would you feel about participating in other educational programs in the future?
26. Finally, what do you hope you will be doing five years from now? Has the program had any impact on how you think about your future?

Graduate

1. How did you first hear about the program?
2. When did you first hear about the program?
3. What were you told about the program?
4. Were there any people who influenced your decision to get involved?
5. What were your reasons for deciding to participate?
6. What did you hope to gain from the program?
7. Think back to the first day in class and describe what it was like.
8. How did you feel about being in the program during that first class?
9. Now that you have completed the program, are your feelings any different? Explain.
10. How would you describe the program to someone who has never heard of it?
11. What did you like most about the program?
12. What did you like least about the program?
13. Was the location of the program convenient?
14. Was the program offered at a convenient time for you (day/year)?
15. Were there factors that made it hard for you to get to class?
16. How did your (family/friends) feel about your participation in the program?
17. How has your life changed as a result of the program?
18. Were there any problems with your being in the program?
19. How do you think the program will better your life?
20. What advice would you give to someone who is just starting the program?
21. Suppose you were the person in charge of the program and you had all the money you needed, what changes would you make?
22. Would you join the program if you had it to do all over again? Explain.
23. Would you encourage others to participate? If so, what would say to them?
24. Based on your experience in this program, how would you feel about participating in other educational programs in the future?
25. Finally, what do you hope you will be doing five years from now? Has the program had any impact on howyou think about your future?

Student Who Did not Complete the Program

1. How long were you in the program?
2. What were your reasons for deciding to participate?
3. What were your experiences like in the program?
4. What did you like most about the program?
5. What did you like least about the program?
6. How did your family and friends feel about your participation in the program?
7. What were your reasons for leaving the program? Explain.
8. Is there any way the program could be changed to make it work for you?
9. Would you consider completing the program at a future time? Explain.
10. Would you consider participating in another educational program like this one in the future?

Grant Fund Decliner

1. Have you used JTPA grant funds (provided by the Texas Literacy Council) in the past for literacy training?
   If yes:
   a. Was the program successful?
   b. In what way was the program successful/unsuccessful?
   c. What contribution did the JTPA literacy grant money make to your overall operating budget?
   d. Who were the partners?
   e. Did they function effectively together?

2. What made you decide to apply for JTPA literacy grant funds?

3. What were the reasons for declining funds after you applied?

4. Were the partners (sub-contractors) involved in the decision to decline grant funding?

5. What other funds are available that enable you to operate the literacy program without the use of JTPA literacy money?

6. In your opinion, what changes could be made in the JTPA literacy program to make it function more effectively?

7. Do you plan on seeking JTPA literacy funding in the future?

8. In your opinion, are there people who are not being served because of the decision to decline grant funding? Please explain.